



Professor John Croall
Bulletin Editor

Expect the unexpected

Just when life starts getting a bit predictable, stuff happens. Usually of the unexpected variety of course, and in my case, as a medical microbiologist, it is usually a new germ hitting the streets.

Swine 'flu!' Head for the hills! So far the swine 'flu (I'm either just old enough or just pedantic enough to use the initial apostrophe which the media have now abandoned) has not come to much, but it is early days. Plenty of cases in the UK – over 200 as I type, but no deaths so far, thankfully. But plenty of meetings, oh yes. Pandemic influenza preparedness committees. Daily at first. A bit OTT for this particular A H1N1 virus, but not so if it had been something really nasty like avian 'flu. Still, the advent of this virus has filled the days of many people like me who have plenty of other things to be getting on with. As a result this editorial is rather last minute!

There's plenty of articles of interest in this issue. Have a look at Sir James Underwood's expert dissection of the Human Tissue Act on page 198. Histopathologists should read about the survey into neck and back pain among their colleagues – I bet a lot of you are affected by this, so it is required reading for anyone who uses a microscope for extended periods: page 209.

The communications questionnaire. It is great to get feedback on what you enjoy doing. I've been Editor for 18 months now and I'm certainly keen to find out what people think of this publication – it is for all of you so if it doesn't work I need to

know. Now I have some idea. A lot of you don't have time to read this, but more (who answered the questionnaire) do. At least some of it. Many named the editorial and the President's column as the highlights. Thanks! Others find much of interest throughout the issue. A lot of people enjoyed the January National Pathology Week issue. Some didn't though. Many however say they just read stuff that concerns their specialty. I certainly try to cover most specialties most of the time – but it can be hard. This issue contains only a little of direct relevance to, er, microbiology – TSEs, page 205 and an excellent infection control book review, page 260. Any microbiologists out there want to see more microbiology in the *Bulletin*? Better get writing then.

I've still to really finish analysing the results – there's gold dust in them thar data. I much prefer analysing numbers but free text data analysis is possible. I've presented the findings here relating to the question 'Which are the parts of the *Bulletin* that you most enjoy reading?'

Finally I'd like to introduce you to a new section in the *Bulletin*: Ethics. About time too I think. We've made a start with a few articles: page 245. And I've chosen a colour for the section. Ethics is certainly not black or white and is often a bit foggy. So we're using grey.

If you've got any ethical questions that you'd like answered, then please send them to me. This could become a lively debating area so let's see what we can do.

Professor John Croall
Editor
publications@rcpath.org

Figure 1: The parts of the *Bulletin* that you most enjoy reading (total is 389 answers analysed)

